



WALES AUDIT OFFICE
SWYDDFA ARCHWILIO CYMRU

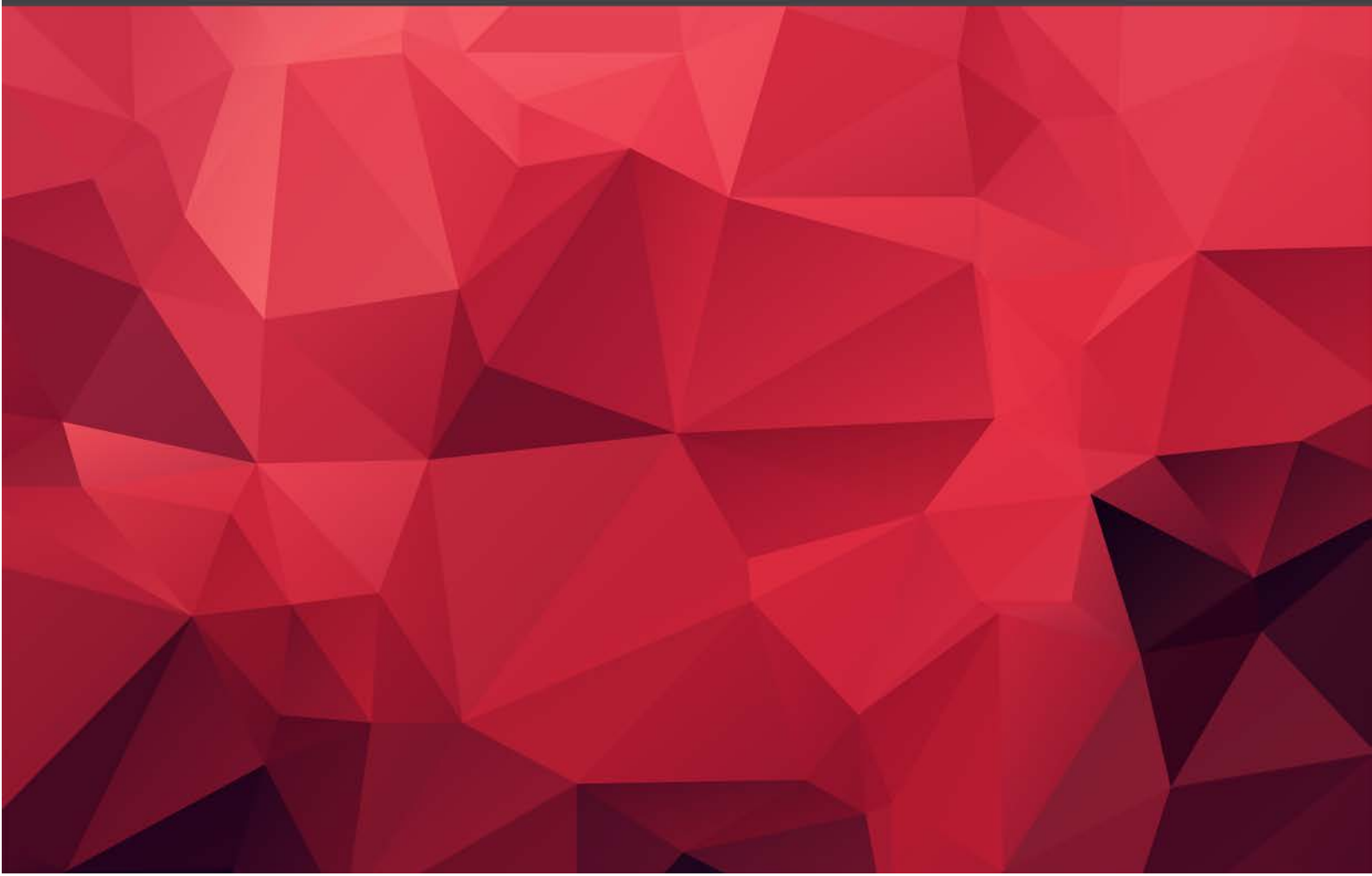
Archwilydd Cyffredinol Cymru
Auditor General for Wales

Audit of Financial Statements Report – The County Council of the City and County of Cardiff

Audit year: 2016-17

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disclosure or re-use of this document should be sent to the Wales Audit Office at

infoofficer@audit.wales.

We welcome correspondence and telephone calls in Welsh and English. Corresponding in Welsh will not lead to delay. Rydym yn croesawu gohebiaeth a galwadau ffôn yn Gymraeg a Saesneg. Ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

Contents

The Auditor General intends to issue an unqualified audit report on your financial statements. There are some issues to report to you prior to their approval.

Summary report

Introduction	4
Status of the audit	4
Proposed audit report	4
Significant issues arising from the audit	5
Independence and objectivity	6

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Final Letter of Representation	7
Appendix 2 – Proposed audit report of the Auditor General to the Members of the County Council of the City and County of Cardiff	10
Appendix 3 – summary of corrections made to the draft financial statements which should be drawn to the attention of those charged with governance	13

Summary report

Introduction

- 1 The Auditor General is responsible for providing an opinion on whether the financial statements give a true and fair view of the financial position of the County Council of the City and County of Cardiff (the Council) at 31 March 2017 and its income and expenditure for the year then ended.
- 2 We do not try to obtain absolute assurance that the financial statements are correctly stated, but adopt the concept of materiality. In planning and conducting the audit, we seek to identify material misstatements in your financial statements, namely, those that might result in a reader of the accounts being misled.
- 3 The quantitative level at which we judge such misstatements to be material for the Council's accounts is £11.7 million. Whether an item is judged to be material can also be affected by certain qualitative issues such as legal and regulatory requirements and political sensitivity.
- 4 International Standard on Auditing (ISA) 260 requires us to report certain matters arising from the audit of the financial statements to those charged with governance of a body in sufficient time to enable appropriate action.
- 5 This report sets out for consideration the matters arising from the audit of the financial statements of the Council, for 2016-17, that require reporting under ISA 260.

Status of the audit

- 6 We received an initial draft of the draft financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2017 on 15 June 2017 in line with the agreed deadline and have now substantially completed the audit work.
- 7 We are reporting to you the more significant issues arising from the audit, which we believe you must consider prior to approval of the financial statements. The audit team has already discussed these issues with officers.

Proposed audit report

- 8 It is the Auditor General's intention to issue an unqualified audit report on the financial statements once you have provided us with a Letter of Representation based on that set out in [Appendix 1](#).
- 9 The proposed audit report is set out in [Appendix 2](#).

Significant issues arising from the audit

Uncorrected misstatements

- 10 There are no misstatements identified in the financial statements, which remain uncorrected.

Corrected misstatements

- 11 There are misstatements that have been corrected by management, but which we consider should be drawn to your attention due to their relevance to your responsibilities over the financial reporting process. They are set out with explanations in [Appendix 3](#).

Other significant issues arising from the audit

- 12 In the course of the audit, we consider a number of matters both qualitative and quantitative relating to the accounts and report any significant issues arising to you. There were some issues arising in these areas this year:

- **We have no concerns about the qualitative aspects of your accounting practices and financial reporting.** We found the information provided to be relevant, reliable, comparable, material and easy to understand. We concluded that accounting policies and estimates are appropriate and financial statement disclosures unbiased, fair and clear.
- **We did not encounter any significant difficulties during the audit.** We received information in a timely and helpful manner and were not restricted in our work. We will continue to work with officers to make further improvements to the quality of working papers supporting the accounts and audit process, as well as the accounts closure timetable for 2017-18.
- **There are two other matters discussed and corresponded upon with management which we need to report to you.** In 2015-16 officers accepted our recommendation to review the classification of Investment properties to ensure they fully meet the Code's definitions. The first part of a comprehensive review was to revalue all investment properties and this has been completed in 2016-17. The second part to be carried out by officers in 2017-18 will be to consider each investment property against the Code's definitions, and we will work closely with officers to inform this review. Officers have not made any changes to the classification of investment properties in the 2016-17 accounts.

We also flagged to officers that improvements are needed in the description of assets and, in particular, infrastructure assets within the Council's fixed assets registers. This will ensure that assets are more clearly identifiable,

can be tracked year to year, and officers can confirm they are accounted for and depreciated correctly in line with the Council's accounting policies.

- **There are no other matters significant to the oversight of the financial reporting process that we need to report to you.**
- **We did not identify any material weaknesses in your internal controls that have not been reported to you already.**
- **There are not any other matters specifically required by auditing standards to be communicated to those charged with governance.**

Independence and objectivity

- 13 As part of the finalisation process, we are required to provide you with representations concerning our independence.
- 14 We have complied with ethical standards and in our professional judgment, we are independent and our objectivity is not compromised. There are no relationships between the Wales Audit Office and the Council that we consider to bear on our objectivity and independence.

Appendix 1

Final Letter of Representation

[Audited body's letterhead]

Auditor General for Wales
Wales Audit Office
24 Cathedral Road
Cardiff
CF11 9LJ

[Date]

Representations regarding the 2016-17 financial statements

This letter is provided in connection with your audit of the financial statements of the County Council of the City and County of Cardiff (the Council) for the year ended 31 March 2017 for the purpose of expressing an opinion on their truth and fairness and their proper preparation.

We confirm that to the best of our knowledge and belief, having made enquiries as we consider sufficient, we can make the following representations to you.

Management representations

Responsibilities

We have fulfilled our responsibilities for:

- The preparation of the financial statements in accordance with legislative requirements and CIPFA Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the UK 2016-17; in particular the financial statements give a true and fair view in accordance therewith.
- The design, implementation, maintenance and review of internal control to prevent and detect fraud and error.

Information provided

We have provided you with:

- Full access to:
 - all information of which we are aware that is relevant to the preparation of the financial statements such as books of account and supporting documentation, minutes of meetings and other matters;

- additional information that you have requested from us for the purpose of the audit; and
- unrestricted access to staff from whom you determined it necessary to obtain audit evidence.
- The results of our assessment of the risk that the financial statements may be materially misstated as a result of fraud.
- Our knowledge of fraud or suspected fraud that we are aware of and that affects the Council and involves:
 - management;
 - employees who have significant roles in internal control; or
 - others where the fraud could have a material effect on the financial statements.
- Our knowledge of any allegations of fraud, or suspected fraud, affecting the financial statements communicated by employees, former employees, regulators or others.
- Our knowledge of all known instances of non-compliance or suspected non-compliance with laws and regulations whose effects should be considered when preparing the financial statements.
- The identity of all related parties and all the related party relationships and transactions of which we are aware.
- Our knowledge of all known partnerships and joint working/ collaborative arrangements that would impact on the financial statements.

Financial statement representations

All transactions, assets and liabilities have been recorded in the accounting records and are reflected in the financial statements.

Significant assumptions used in making accounting estimates, including those measured at fair value, are reasonable.

Related party relationships and transactions have been appropriately accounted for and disclosed.

All events occurring subsequent to the reporting date which require adjustment or disclosure have been adjusted for or disclosed.

All known actual or possible litigation and claims whose effects should be considered when preparing the financial statements have been disclosed to the auditor and accounted for and disclosed in accordance with the applicable financial reporting framework.

The Council has complied with all conditions imposed by relevant grant paying organisations and can reasonably expect to receive the amounts of grant included within the accounts.

The Council has complied with all aspects of contractual agreements that would require adjustment to, or disclosure in, the accounting statements and related notes.

The reserves of the Council have been reviewed and are properly treated within the final accounts in accordance with the CIPFA guidance.

The provisions of the Council have been reviewed and have been properly treated within the final accounts in accordance with IAS 37.

The Council has accounted for and disclosed its partnership and joint/collaborative working arrangements in accordance with accounting standards and the CIPFA Code.

The financial statements are free of material misstatements, including omissions. There were no uncorrected misstatements.

Representations by the Council

We acknowledge that the representations made by management, above, have been discussed with us.

We acknowledge our responsibility for the preparation of true and fair financial statements in accordance with the applicable financial reporting framework. The financial statements were approved by the County Council of the City and County of Cardiff on XX September 2017.

We confirm that we have taken all the steps that we ought to have taken in order to make ourselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that it has been communicated to you. We confirm that, as far as we are aware, there is no relevant audit information of which you are unaware.

Signed by:

[Officer who signs on behalf of
management]

Date:

Signed by:

[Officer or Member who signs on behalf
of those charged with governance]

Date:

Appendix 2

Proposed audit report of the Auditor General to the Members of the County Council of the City and County of Cardiff

I have audited the accounting statements and related notes of:

- The County Council of the City and County of Cardiff;
- The County Council of the City and County of Cardiff Group; and
- The Cardiff and Vale of Glamorgan Pension Fund;

for the year ended 31 March 2017 under the Public Audit (Wales) Act 2004.

The County Council of the City and County of Cardiff's accounting statements comprise the Movement in Reserves Statement, the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement, the Balance Sheet, the Cash Flow Statement, the Movement on the Housing Revenue Account Statement and the Housing Revenue Account Income and Expenditure Statement.

The County Council of the City and County of Cardiff's Group accounting statements comprise the Group Movement in Reserves Statement, the Group Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement, the Group Balance Sheet and the Group Cash Flow Statement.

The Cardiff and Vale of Glamorgan Pension Fund's accounting statements comprise the Fund Account and the Net Assets Statement.

The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2016-17 based on International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRSs).

Respective responsibilities of the responsible financial officer and the Auditor General for Wales

As explained more fully in the Statement of Responsibilities for the Statement of Accounts set out on page XX, the responsible financial officer is responsible for the preparation of the statement of accounts, including the County Council of the City and County of Cardiff's Group accounting statements and the Cardiff and Vale of Glamorgan Pension Fund's accounting statements, which gives a true and fair view.

My responsibility is to audit the accounting statements and related notes in accordance with applicable law and International Standards on Auditing (UK and Ireland). Those standards require me to comply with the Financial Reporting Council's Ethical Standards for Auditors.

Scope of the audit of the accounting statements

An audit involves obtaining evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the accounting statements and related notes sufficient to give reasonable assurance that the accounting statements and related notes are free from material misstatement, whether caused by fraud or error. This includes an assessment of: whether the accounting

policies are appropriate to the County Council of the City and County of Cardiff; the County Council of the City and County of Cardiff Group and the Cardiff and Vale of Glamorgan Pension Fund's circumstances and have been consistently applied and adequately disclosed; the reasonableness of significant accounting estimates made by the responsible financial officer and the overall presentation of the accounting statements and related notes.

In addition, I read all the financial and non-financial information in the Narrative Report to identify material inconsistencies with the audited accounting statements and related notes and to identify any information that is apparently materially incorrect based on, or materially inconsistent with, the knowledge acquired by me in the course of performing the audit. If I become aware of any apparent material misstatements or inconsistencies, I consider the implications for my report.

Opinion on the accounting statements of the County Council of the City and County of Cardiff

In my opinion the accounting statements and related notes:

- give a true and fair view of the financial position of the County Council of the City and County of Cardiff as at 31 March 2017 and of its income and expenditure for the year then ended; and
- have been properly prepared in accordance with the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2016-17.

Opinion on the accounting statements of the County Council of the City and County of Cardiff Group

In my opinion the accounting statements and related notes:

- give a true and fair view of the financial position of the County Council of the City and County of Cardiff Group as at 31 March 2017 and of its income and expenditure for the year then ended; and
- have been properly prepared in accordance with the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2016-17.

Opinion on the accounting statements of Cardiff and Vale of Glamorgan Pension Fund

In my opinion, the Pension Fund accounts and related notes:

- give a true and fair view of the financial transactions of Cardiff and Vale of Glamorgan Pension Fund during the year ended 31 March 2017 and of the amount and disposition of the fund's assets and liabilities as at that date, other than liabilities to pay pensions and benefits after the end of the scheme year; and
- have been properly prepared in accordance with the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2016-17.

Opinion on other matters

In my opinion, the information contained in the Narrative Report is consistent with the accounting statements and related notes.

Matters on which I report by exception

I have nothing to report in respect of the following matters, which I report to you, if, in my opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept;
- the accounting statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns;
- I have not received all the information and explanations I require for my audit; or
- the Annual Governance Statement does not reflect compliance with guidance.

Certificate of completion of audit

I certify that I have completed the audit of the accounts of the County Council of the City and County of Cardiff in accordance with the requirements of the Public Audit (Wales) Act 2004 and the Auditor General for Wales' Code of Audit Practice.

For and on behalf of

Huw Vaughan Thomas

Auditor General for Wales

[Date]

24 Cathedral Road

Cardiff

CF11 9LJ

The maintenance and integrity of the County Council of the City and County of Cardiff's website is the responsibility of the Accounting Officer/Client officer; the work carried out by auditors does not involve consideration of these matters and accordingly auditors accept no responsibility for any changes that may have occurred to the financial statements since they were initially presented on the website.

Appendix 3

Summary of corrections made to the draft financial statements which should be drawn to the attention of those charged with governance

During our audit we identified the following misstatements that have been corrected by management, but which we consider should be drawn to your attention due to their relevance to your responsibilities over the financial reporting process.

Exhibit 1: summary of corrections made to the draft financial statements

Value of correction	Nature of correction	Reason for correction
£31,440,000	Balance Sheet - Increase to Pensions Liability, corresponding decrease in Net Assets at 31 March 2017. Equalised by matching increase to negative Pensions Reserve balance.	Journals posting the actuarially assessed long-term Pension Liability relating to the Local Government Pension Scheme were incorrect and the resulting Pension Liability disclosed on the draft balance sheet did not agree to the actuarially assessed liability.
£3,257,000	Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement – Gain on Sale of Non-Current Assets increases within Other Operating Expenditure. Matched by decrease in Gross Income for Housing Revenue Account within Net Cost of Services.	Receipts arising from sale of HRA properties had been incorrectly posted within the directorate net expenditure. Reclassification moves the receipt into the correct disclosure line.
£1,457,000	Balance Sheet – re-analysis of Insurance Provision balance between liabilities payable within 12 months and over 12 months.	Incorrect calculation of the split of liabilities.
£1,079,000	Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement – decrease in Gross Expenditure for Education Directorate within Net Cost of Services. Matched by decrease in Revaluation Reserve balance on Balance Sheet.	Revaluation of three schools incorrectly charged the negative revaluation partly against Gross Expenditure for Education Directorate within Net Cost of Services. The correct accounting treatment was write-back of existing Revaluation Reserve balances relating to these three schools.

Value of correction	Nature of correction	Reason for correction
£897,000	Balance Sheet – increase in Property, Plant and Equipment balance, Other Land and Buildings category. Matched by adjustments on Revaluation Reserve balance and Capital Adjustment Account balance on Balance Sheet.	Construction costs for new high school site to be jointly used with Cardiff and Vale College were not correctly accounted for at year-end – the Council correctly accounted for expenditure incurred but did not uplift the value of the site land in line with the agreed arrangements on accounting for the original land transfer.
Various	A number of amendments to narratives and notes to the financial statements have been made to correct transposition errors, cross referencing etc.	To ensure that notes are accurate and cross reference within the body of the financial statements.

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